

Republican Building  
(Morrow Building)  
229-231 Bank Street  
Waterbury  
New Haven County  
Connecticut

HABS No. CT-411

HABS  
CONN,  
S-WATB,  
17-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

HABS  
CONN,  
5-WATB,  
17 -

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

REPUBLICAN BUILDING  
(Morrow Building)

HABS No. CT-411

Location: 229-231 Bank Street, Waterbury, New Haven  
County, Connecticut.

USGS Waterbury Quadrangle, Universal  
Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 18.662240.  
4601720

Present Owner: Waterbury Renewal and Economic Development  
Agency  
Leavenworth Street  
Waterbury, Connecticut 06702

Present Occupant: Vacant

Significance: In 1883 Corinne and J. Henry Morrow purchased the south-west corner of Henry C. Griggs' homestead, and built the Republican Building to accommodate his expanding newspaper and printing businesses. The Waterbury Republican, founded by Morrow as a weekly paper in 1881, printed its first daily edition from the new Republican Building in 1884.

Typical of the Victorian period, the Republican Building's stylistic sources are eclectic. But, nonetheless, its appearance is simple if not elegant. Most ornamentation is limited to the gabled parapet where brick corbeling and terra-cotta panels frame a large semi-circular window below.

Although the Republican was the earliest commercial building in the area, and prefigured the ultimate development of the block, it is perhaps more significant in its place within the entire Bank Street Historic District: a contiguous row of multi-story buildings set close to the sidewalk, highly decorative and diverse in style, yet closely related in size, scale, and materials. Together the four buildings are typical of Waterbury's commercial architecture at the turn of the century. They also represent the city's prosperity and its economic growth during that period.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION -

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1883.
2. Architect unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The following is an incomplete chain of title to the land on which the structure stands. Reference is to the Clerk's Office of Waterbury, New Haven County, Connecticut.

1883 Deed, July 5, 1883, recorded in Volume 190, p. 31.

Henry C. Griggs to Corinne Morrow.

1890 Deed, June 6, 1890, recorded in Volume 125, p. 474.

Corinne and J. Henry Morrow to Fred B. Rice.

1891 Deed, August 28, 1891, recorded in Volume 128, p. 623.

Fred B. Rice to Joseph Corr.

1902 Deed, June 20, 1902, recorded in Volume 176, p. 356.

Joseph Corr to Ralph and Samuel Jacobs.

1905 Quit Claim, January 24, 1905, recorded in Volume 189, p. 323.

Samuel Jacobs to Ralph Jacobs.

1912 Deed, February 7, 1912, recorded in Volume 237, p. 693.

Ralph Jacobs to D. Giampetruzzi, C. Martino, and G. Martino.

1919 Deed, August 20, 1919, recorded in Volume 306, p. 32.

D. Giampetruzzi and G. Martino to Samuel Matzkin.

1920 Deed, December 16, 1920, recorded in Volume 318, p. 489.

Harry, Louis, and Samuel Matzkin to Joseph Matzkin.

1923 Deed, August 23, 1923, recorded in Volume 346,

p. 67.  
Joseph Matzkin to Emma Diorio.

1945 Deed, May 28, 1945, recorded in Volume 545, p.  
162.  
Emma Diorio to Anthony Diorio.

1950 Deed, August 1, 1950, recorded in Volume 625,  
p. 561.  
Anthony Diorio to Rocco Diorio.

1972 Deed, June 22, 1972, recorded in Volume 1043,  
p. 271.  
Diorio Realty Corporation to the City of  
Waterbury.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: No information found.
5. Original plans and construction: Originally planned for light manufacturing and first floor office and retail space, the building was partitioned on the ground floor and kept open on the upper floors. (See Ill. F.2. of this outline.) The original staircase, like the existing one, ran along the north wall from the first floor up to the third.

The south elevation was originally designed as a party wall for the now razed O'Brien's Block. An open area to the rear of this elevation provided for two windows on both the second and the third stories. They are now infilled.

No original drawings, plans, or early photographs have been located, and without these the original plans for the north elevation and first floor facade are difficult to determine.

6. Alterations and additions: Changes to the original structure include a rear addition, storefront modernizations, and extensive interior remodeling. Since little documentation exists, physical evidence and records on the building's various uses have been used to estimate when and for what purposes these changes occurred.

Judging by differences in style and materials, the rear addition was added in two stages. The ground floor addition, constructed of brick with a painted stucco face and flat roof, spans beyond the

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building's 20'-0" width. It contains a bathroom, service area, and rear exit. The date of construction is not known. Built of wood and above the ground floor addition is a smaller second story enclosed porch and third story open porch with fire escape and large exhaust duct. Inside there is a dumbwaiter which services the first and second floors. Most likely this addition was built during the years that Diorios occupied the building.

All three floors have been remodeled at one time or another. The first floor received a built-in bar and booth fixtures. The second floor, most likely done concurrently with Diorio's storefront, was made into a private dining area with dark paneling and over-sized art deco cornice moldings. Second floor windows on the west elevation were shortened to accommodate the hung ceiling. Access to the restaurant was through openings cut into the south wall on both the first and second floors. They are now filled in. The third floor was converted into a six room apartment.

The building's most recent exterior alterations took place after the razing of O'Brien's Block in the 1980's. Before this time, Diorio's art deco facade, a familiar Waterbury site, spanned the storefronts of the Republican Building and half of O'Brien's Block. The latest facade alteration, done by Waterbury's Urban Renewal and Economic Development Agency, is an eclectic assemblage of psuedo-historic elements.

B. Historical Context:

The Republican Building, built in 1883, was the Waterbury Daily Republican's first home. Previously, a weekly paper, founded and edited by Henry J. Morrow in 1881, the Daily Republican printed its first edition on January 2, 1884 in its new offices. Initially, the first floor accommodated the Republican's editorial office, Morrow's sideline printing business, and the Chadwick Butter Company's retail store. Printing presses were located on the second floor, and the third floor was for let. (See III. F.2., 3., and 4. of this outline.)

In 1890 Corinne and J. Henry Morrow sold the newspaper and building and retired to California where the deed was signed. The paper, bought by the American Printing

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Company, moved to larger offices on Grand Street. Thomas Dudley Wells, associate editor for some years under Mr. Morrow, became the new editor.

For the next thirty-three years the Republican, or Morrow Building, housed various light manufacturing enterprises such as Martino and Company's Beer Bottling Business and the Waterbury Leather Company. In 1911 the first lease for a saloon was signed. Between 1919 and 1920 the building's owners filed for bankruptcy, and in 1923 Emma Diorio bought the building.

In 1934, expanding their restaurant and bar operation, the Diorio's bought the adjacent O'Brien's Block. Together, both buildings became known simply as 'Dorios', a Waterbury landmark. The Republican's first floor remained a bar. The second floor, converted into a private dining room, was a hangout for illicit poker games on the weekends. The third floor was leased as an apartment.

In 1972 the Diorio's Realty Corporation sold the building to the City of Waterbury. Diorio's Restaurant continued to be leased from the city until 1980 when a large fire closed the business. The condemned building, slated for demolition by Waterbury's Urban Renewal Agency, was saved through the efforts of the local preservation group WATCH: Waterbury Action to Conserve Our Heritage, Inc. WATCH had brought a suit against the City's Urban Renewal Agency and HUD in 1978, arguing that national review procedures must be followed before the demolition of any historic property. In 1979, under the National Historic Preservation Act, the U.S. Second District Court of Appeals ruled that as long as federal agencies retain funding control, they must consider the effect of their projects on historic properties. In other words, Waterbury's Urban Renewal Agency, still under contract with HUD, could only raze buildings declared not eligible for the National Register by the National Advisory Council on Historic Places. The court's ruling in favor of WATCH set a national precedent for towns owning historic properties.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Republican Building is a red-brick three-bay Victorian commercial

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structure. The facade's composition is well-balanced and straightforward. Its distinguishing features include heavy rough-cut granite sills and lintels, a large attic lunette window, and a gabled parapet with small terra-cotta panels and intricate brick corbeling.

2. Condition of the fabric: The roof is in need of replacement. Many interior finishes have suffered from fire, neglect, and water damage. However, the foundation, masonry, walls, and most wood framing appear to be in sound condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The three-and-one-half story, three bay, main building is rectangular in plan. It measures 22'-0" wide by 80'-0" deep. At the beginning of the shed roof, the building's west elevation measures 44'-0" tall and slopes down to 38'-0" in the rear. The west addition spans the width of the building, and measures 14'-0" deep by 10'-0" tall. (See Site Plan, page 16.)
2. Foundation: The foundation is of large rough-cut fieldstones and mortar measuring 2'-0" thick.
3. Walls: The west facade is of red-brick construction laid in a standard running bond. Detail materials include grey granite and unglazed terra-cotta. Non-original vertical wood siding covers the only remaining original storefront feature: four granite quoins on each side of the first floor facade.

The exposed south elevation, once a party wall, is of soft brick laid in a standard running bond with a full header every eighth course. Joist marks from the razed building, once pocketed into this south elevation, are apparent by the pattern of infills at each story.

The east elevation is of red brick construction faced with stucco. The bricks are laid in a standard running bond with a full header every eight course. The stucco is painted a dark red.

4. Structural system, framing: The Republican Building has two load-bearing masonry walls running east-west. Wood floor joists and rafters, spanning

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20'-0", are pocketed into these walls. In the basement, a 1980 fire necessitated the reinforcement of most ceiling joists and the addition of a new centrally located support system. Consequently, double 2"x12" joists at 16" o.c. span to new 8"x10" timbers which are supported by lally columns and a concrete block wall. Where original joists haven't been charred, they measure 3"x12" at 16" o.c. and span the building's entire width. (See Basement Plan, page 17.) On the second floor, joists are 3"x14" at 16" o.c. Third floor joists are 3"x12" at 16" o.c., and the ceiling joists are 2"x8" at 16" o.c. Roof rafters, also pocketed into the bearing walls, measure 2"x10" at 20" o.c.

5. Porches: A non-original two-story porch addition is located on the east elevation in the far left bay, its purpose is purely functional. Built above an earlier addition, it is enclosed on the second story and open on the third. The second story is covered by red-painted wood shingles and partially hidden by a large exhaust duct. The third story has an attached fire escape and shed roof.
6. Chimneys: In the north-west corner is a simple brick chimney. It is sandwiched between the Republican Building and its northern neighbor. The chimney, originally shorter, was built up in order to accommodate the new northern building and its higher roofline. In the southwall two flues run up from the building's basement. They are not capped and end abruptly at the roofline.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: There are two entrances to the building. The first, on the left of the west street facade, is a non-original wood paneled door set 3'-0" back from the sidewalk. The second, located in the center of the east-side addition, is a rectangular opening with a plywood-covered door. One final doorway, located on the third floor in the left bay of the east elevation, has a low-rise arched opening with a granite threshold. It has a painted hollow-core wooden door.
  - b. Windows: The west facade's non-original storefront, divided into three bays, has two fixed windows in the middle and right bays. A small



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fanlight is located above the left entranceway. All openings are surrounded by simple wooden molding. The two upper floors, of the same elevation, each have four equal-sized window openings organized as four bays. The middle two windows are visually tied together by their abutting lintels and sills. All windows have non-original double-hung sashes with 6" high rough-cut granite sills and 1'-0" rough-cut granite lintels. On the second story, wood panels have been added above and below the shortened six-over-one sashes. The third story windows fill the original openings with nine-over-one sashes. Above, a large semi-circular window opening is divided into three parts and surrounded by a granite sill and brick arch.

The east elevation window openings have rough-cut granite sills and 4" rise segmental arches. Window sashes are double-hung four-over-fours. Some original openings are totally obscured by the two rear additions, and some partially obscured by venting devices or plywood.

Masonry or plywood infills block the four south-elevation windows which also have granite sills and low rise arches.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The building's shed roof slopes gradually down from west to east. It is covered with non-original asphalt roofing. The roof is in need of replacement.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The west's brick facade rises into a low-pitched gabled parapet. Here, the building's simple ornamentation is at its most elaborate. Intricate brick corbeling steps up to the gable's ridge. A band of small terra-cotta panels, inserted between the corbeling, also follows the gable form. Above this, simple wood molding finishes the facade. The molding has been water damaged, and four terra-cotta panels appear to have been inappropriately rebuilt.

The shed roof slopes down to an attached metal gutter which spans the building's east side. On the south elevation the brick party wall rises

above the roof's slope.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floorplans: Sketch plans included, see pages 16 through 21.
2. Stairways: The building's stairway runs straight up from the first to third floor. There is a small landing between the first and second floor. A molded baseboard replaces the paneling on the third floor run. Thin machine-turned newels and balister border the third floor opening.
3. Flooring: On all three floors original flooring has been re-covered or removed. Green and white linoleum tiles cover badly charred and wet sub-flooring on the first floor. A damp carpet covers the second floor. And, on the third floor under the fungi, there is hardwood flooring, most likely added when the space was converted into an apartment.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The first floor bar has dark-stained paneled mahogany wainscotting which wraps around the room's perimeter. Above, a dark wooden valance separates wallpaper from the yellow painted pressed-tin ceiling.

On the second floor, dark-red paneled pine wainscotting, similar in detail to the first floor, also wraps around the room's perimeter. Above, an overhanging art deco molded cornice separates imitation wood paneling from the accoustic-tile hung ceiling. Under these non-original finishes are remnants of narrow-board wainscotting and a severely damaged pressed-tin ceiling.

Perimeter walls on the third floor are plaster and lath. The more recent partition walls are of wood-stud and plasterboard construction. Wallpaper covers the main living areas, while black-and-white ceramic tile covers the kitchen and bath. Simple molded baseboards finish the edges. Neglect and water have damaged all finishes. Investigations above the ceiling have revealed an interesting discovery. Between the joists were laid many Waterbury Daily Republican Newspapers dating from 1884 to 1886. Presumably, the Republican, having printed too many papers, had placed these extras in

the attic for insulation.

5. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: No original doorways remain. However, later notable doorways include the first floor's bar entry and rear exit. In keeping with the room's decor, these doorways are framed and trimmed in molded dark-stained mahogany. The vestibule's entranceway has large leaded-glass french doors. In the rear, an elaborate arched partition frames the original east exit and separates a small service area from the bar proper. The partition is constructed of wood and its design is derived from classical elements. Two pairs of fluted piers, each capped by a denticulated entablature, support an arched valance. There are fan coverings in the two spandrels, and a small protruding keystone is centered on the arch. Above this, a beam with greek-key carvings spans the room's width. A heavy paneled door, an access to the rear addition, is framed by a molded entablature resting upon two fluted pilasters.

There is nothing notable about doors or doorways on the upper floors. Standard trim frames standard doors.

- b. Windows: Most windows in the building have been extensively altered. On the first floor, two windows in the bar's paneled west wall are divided by a mirror of the same height. These three partitions are then framed in a similar fashion to the east wall's doorway, with pilasters and an entablature. The two original openings in the east wall have been changed to accommodate a door to the addition's bathroom area on the left, and filled in with shelving on the right.

On the upper floors, remnants of the window's original trim have been discovered under more recent alterations. These remnants reveal that the windows were once trimmed with simple moldings and bull's eye corner blocks. Another source of natural lighting is a small skylight above the third floor's stairs. It is in poor condition.

6. Decorative features and trim: Although nothing

remains of the original office space, the first floor's conversion into a bar has provided the room with many decorative features. Built-in partitioned booths have dark-brown leather seats, curved arm-rests, and high paneled backs. Each partition is topped on the end by an acorn-shaped finial and a multi-hooked coat hanger. Above each booth on the south wall is a flat wooden arch with a small protruding keystone. The long D-shaped bar has a thick curved mahogany counter, a white marble base with dark-red marble pilasters, and a brass foot rail. Above the bar hangs a carved mirror depicting colored scenes of Waterbury landmarks. They are, from left to right, "Knight" Carrie Welton Fountain; Veteran's Memorial; United States Post Office; Scovill Manufacturing Company (Mill); Railroad Station Clock Tower; Waterbury City Hall; Anaconda; St. John's Church; Immaculate Conception Church; Scovill Manufacturing Company; An Early Brass Mill; The Thomaston Dam; and Clock on the City Green.

The upper floors have no notable decorative features which have not been previously described.

7. Hardware: There is no notable or original hardware which is not described above.

8. Mechanical Equipment:

a. HVAC: A no-longer-existent boiler, originally used to power the printing presses, was most likely attached in the basement to the building's north-east chimney. Two flues on the building's interior south wall suggest that coal-burning ovens were the original heating methods. This equipment was later replaced by electricity and an extensive air-duct system with a basement furnace.

b. Lighting: Lighting on the first floor is varied. Large chandeliers mark the vestibule and front and rear entrances. Just before the bar, stand two gold-painted globe lightposts, with "Property of the City of New York" printed on their bases. Along the north and south walls are scalloped soffits which provide for indirect lighting. On either side of the bar, attached to the mirror, are wall sconces. Finally, outlets at each of the booths and on the ceiling prove that there were also once lighting fixtures in these areas.

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Chandeliers are once again used on the second floor. But aside from these, there is no notable lighting on the upper floors.

- c. Plumbing: No original plumbing fixtures can be found. Four W.C.'s are located on the first floor in the building's east addition. The sanitary main drops down into the basement, slopes along the north wall, and then into the sewer under Bank Street.

9. Alterations to be constructed in 1987-1989: The Republican Building's first floor will remain as a bar. All built-in features will be restored. Floor, wall and ceiling coverings will be repainted or refinished. The upper floors will each have one open plan office space, both accessible from a central corridor which will connect all four buildings.

Exterior work will follow appropriate and recommended restoration methods. The east elevation's addition will be removed, and the original window and door openings restored. On the second story's west elevation, appropriate sized windows will replace the existing. The south elevation will be stuccoed, and the original openings reopened. A cooling tower, servicing all four buildings, will be placed on the roof, and hidden from the street.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The Republican Building is the southernmost structure of four remaining turn of the century commercial buildings, now forming the Bank Street Historic District. The district is located on the east side of Bank Street between Grand Street and Interstate 84. The National Register's Inventory-Nomination form for this district describes the site: "The boundaries of the district reflect the physical isolation of these buildings from the rest of Waterbury's downtown. Formerly, the district was a continuation of the commercial area which extends west on Grand Street and north on Bank Street, but today strong visual interruptions make these four buildings a cohesive unit which stands better on its own".
2. Historic landscape design: The Republican Building stands flush with Bank Street's sidewalk and is

contiguous with the building to its north.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural Drawings: None.
- B. Historic views: None to be found.
- C. Interviews: None.
- D. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Clerk's Office of the City of Waterbury, Waterbury, Connecticut. Waterbury Land Records.

Waterbury Action to Conserve our Heritage. Scrapbook. Historic preservation activities in Waterbury: 1974-1986. Waterbury, Connecticut.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Anderson, Joseph, Editor. The Town and City of Waterbury, Connecticut. From the Aboriginal Period to the Year 1895. Volume 11. New Haven: The Price and Lee Company, 1896.

Connecticut Historical Commission, Hartford, Connecticut. Historic Resources Inventory Form. "Waterbury Architectural Survey." 1978.

Mattatuck Museum, Waterbury, Connecticut. Waterbury Action to Conserve Our Heritage (WATCH). "Central District Rehabilitation Study." 1980.

Pape, William J. History of Waterbury and the Naugatuck Valley, Connecticut. Chicago, New York: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1918, 3 volumes.

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service. National Register of Historic Places. Inventory-Nomination Form: "Bank Street Historic District, Waterbury, Connecticut.

Waterbury Daily Republican. Volume 1, number 44. February 21, 1884. Page 2.

Waterbury Daily Republican. Volume 1, number 139. June 12, 1884. Page 3.

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Waterbury Daily Republican. Volume 1, number 152.  
June 28, 1884. Page 2.

Waterbury Renewal and Economic Development Agency,  
Waterbury, Connecticut. "Central Business District  
Project Historic Survey." 1978.

- E. Likely sources not yet investigated: None known.
- F. Supplemental material:
1. Graphic documentation, see pages 16 through 21.
  2. Copies of Waterbury Republican advertisement: Dated June 12 and 28, 1884. Referenced from I.A.S. and I.B. of this outline.

## TO LET.

THIRD STORY OF THE

### Republican Building,

NO. 159 BANK STREET.

The floor is 80x90 feet in the clear, with ten feet ceiling, and can be let wholly or in part. Will be cut up into offices if required. Could be used for light manufacturing and steam power obtained from the REPUBLICAN press room.

**TO LET**—The third floor of the Republican Building on Bank street—20x90 feet; suitable for business or social purposes. Can be cut up into offices. An excellent place for light manufacturing, as it is well lighted, and steam power can be obtained from the REPUBLICAN's press room on the floor below. Inquire at REPUBLICAN Office.

3. Copy of Waterbury Republican advertisement: Dated February 21, 1884. Referenced from I.B. of this outline.

### Job Printing!

OF EVERY DESCRIPTION,

—At the—

REPUBLICAN OFFICE.

4. Copy of Waterbury Republican advertisement: Dated June 28, 1884. Referenced from 1.B of this outline.

**BUTTER AND EGGS**

**AT COST !**

Retail till further notice.

CHADWICK BUTTER CO.,

Republicann Building,

Waterbury, Conn.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

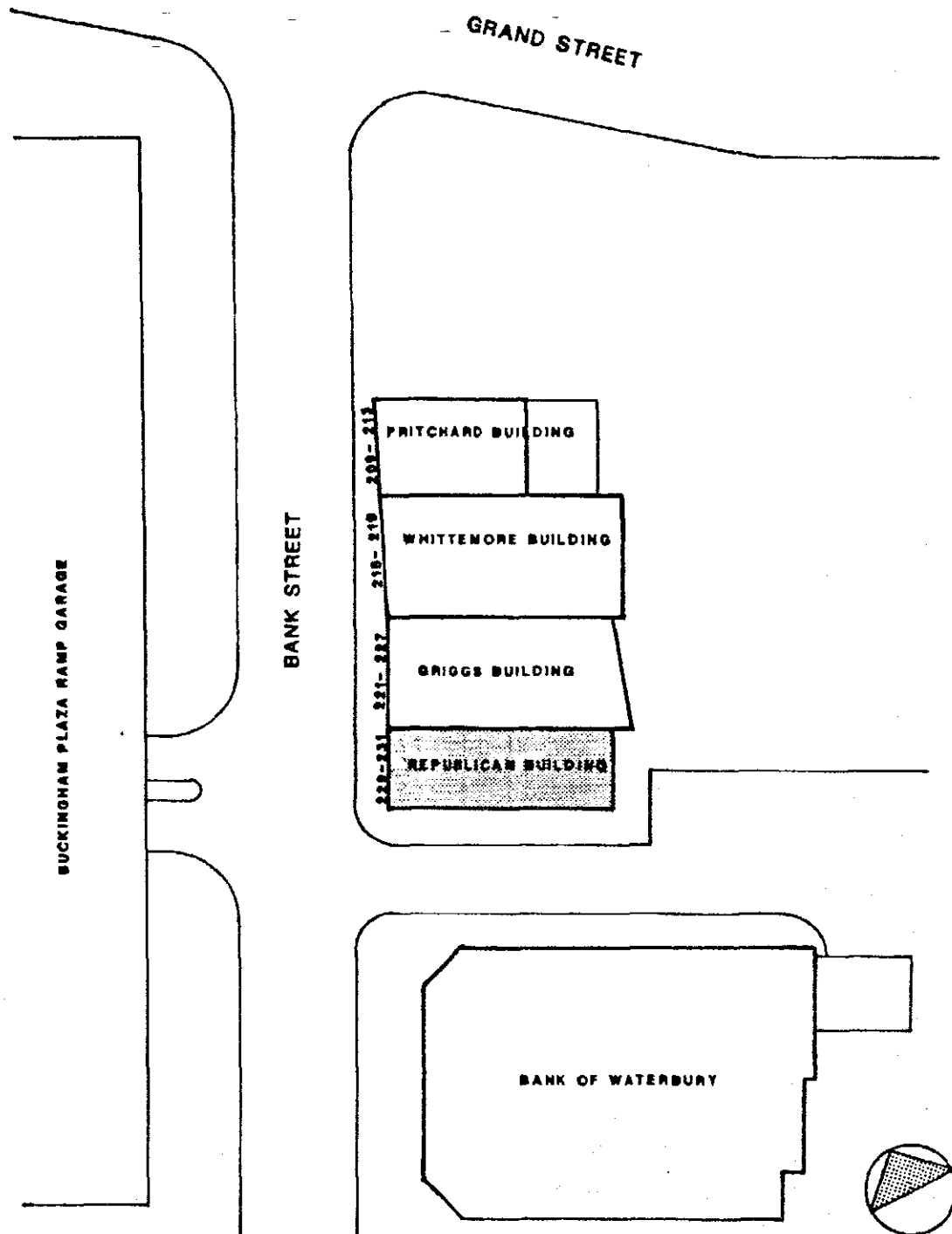
Buckingham Square Associates, in cooperation with Waterbury Renewal and Economic Development Agency and the United States Department of Interior's National Park Service, has undertaken to rehabilitate and restore the Bank Street Historic District. The district lies on the edge of Waterbury's busiest commercial neighborhood. The object of the project is to rehabilitate the four buildings so they will once again be a part of that neighborhood, and at the same time to preserve a part of Waterbury's architectural history.

Section 106 mitigation required documentation of existing resources.

Prepared by: Christina Wasch  
Title: Architectural Assistant  
Affiliation: Michael A. Stein, A.I.A.  
Date: October 1987



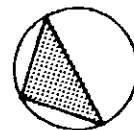
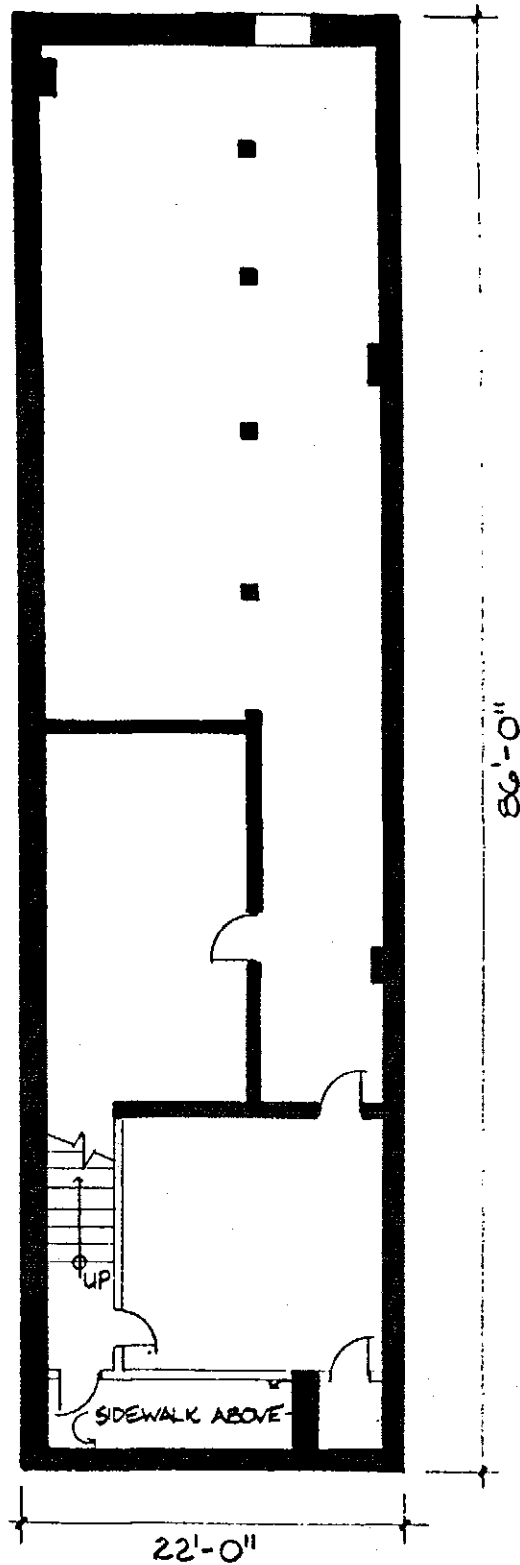
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SITE PLAN

DATE: OCT. 1987

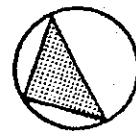
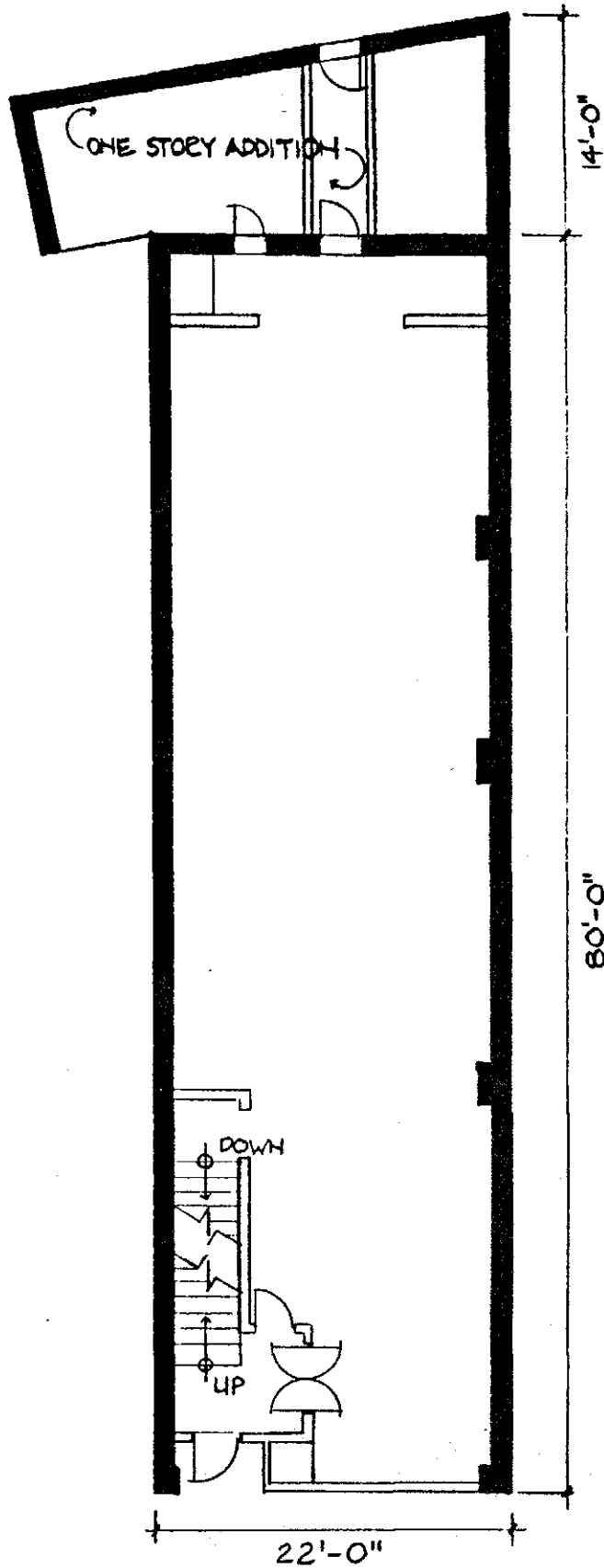
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BASEMENT PLAN

DATE: OCT. 1987

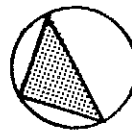
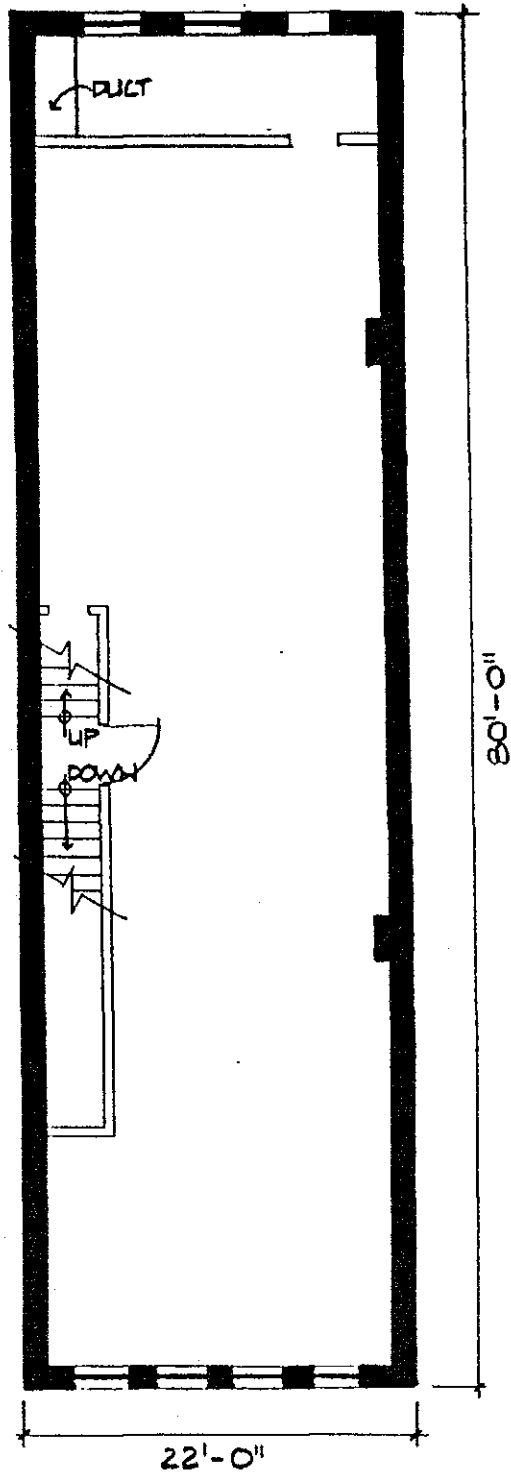
REPUBLICAN BUILDING  
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FIRST FLOOR PLAN

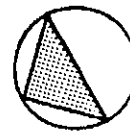
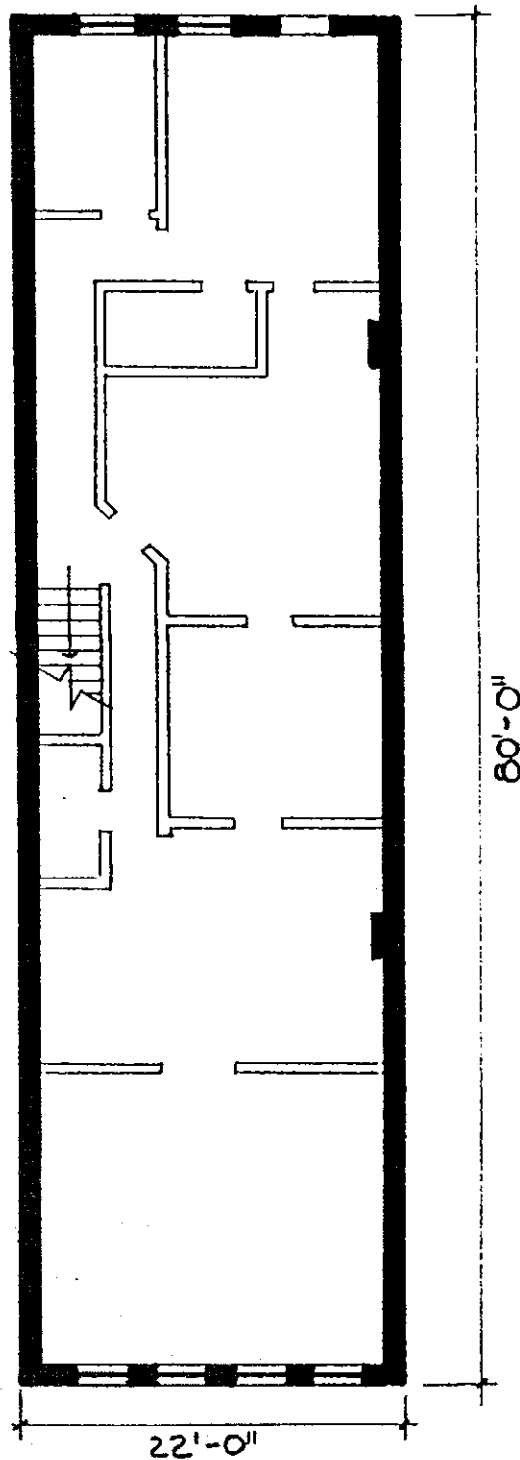
DATE: OCT. 1987

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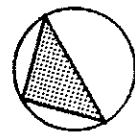
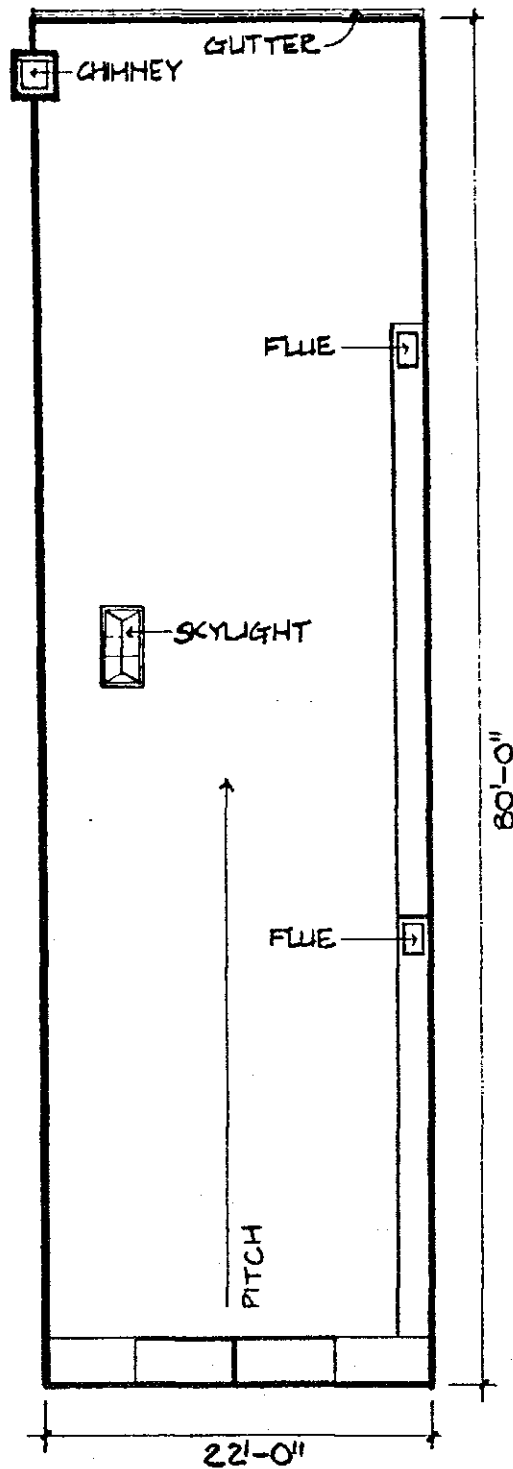
**SECOND FLOOR PLAN**

**DATE: OCT. 1987**



THIRD FLOOR PLAN

DATE: OCT. 1987



ROOF PLAN

DATE: OCT. 1987